



## **Role of Handicraft Micro-Enterprises as a Catalyst for Youth Employment**

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### **Abstract**

South Africa, like many other countries in the world, is faced with the difficulty of how to create employment for the country's young population. There is a pressing need to equip the country's youth with the means to develop their entrepreneurial potential. In this context, the government has to create a support mechanism to help integrate young people into the job market, through handicraft entrepreneurship. Department of Art, Culture, Science and Technology asserts that, not only does the handicraft sector provide income generation opportunities for groups which have access to resources, but also offers employment opportunities for the most economically disadvantaged people in South African society. However, the handicraft sector is performing at a level far below its potential in South Africa. The study sought to examine job creation, income generation and poverty alleviation opportunities in developing the microenterprise-handicraft linkage, with special attention to vulnerable sectors of society, the youths. The research used exploratory approach and qualitative data collection method. The paper presents research findings from both literature review and semi-structured interviews with local producers, supporters, and buyers of handicraft products in Cape Town, Western Cape Province. Finally, the study provides a comprehensive strategy on how to enhance the South African handicraft sector to better meet its needs as a micro-enterprise to create a better living for the people

**Keywords:** *Handicraft, Micro-enterprises, Youth employment, Entrepreneurship, Unemployment, Development.*